



The Future Is Ours (FIO) HIV Risk Reduction Intervention Fact Sheet



The Research

The Science behind the Package

The Future Is Ours (FIO) is an eight-session HIV prevention intervention delivered to high-risk heterosexual women in a group setting. FIO is guided by three major theories, Modified AIDS Risk Reduction Model (M-ARRM), Social Learning Theory, and Gender Theory. The goal of *FIO* is to empower women to reduce unsafe sexual encounters by increasing the use of male and female condoms and alternate protection strategies including sex without penetration, getting tested for HIV jointly with a partner along with mutual monogamy and a safety agreement, deciding to be celibate, and refusing unsafe sex or deciding to not get involved with a partner who will not use condoms.

Target Population

FIO is a gender-specific HIV/STD risk reduction intervention designed for heterosexually active, at-risk women of diverse ethnicities (African-American/Black, Caribbean, Latina, White), ages 18 to 30, who are not injection drug users, are HIV-negative or of unknown status, are not pregnant or trying to become pregnant, and who live in communities where rates of HIV and other STDs are high.

Intervention

Research Results

In the original research, *FIO* was found to be effective in reducing unprotected vaginal and anal intercourse in both the short-term (one month after the intervention) and long-term (12 months after the intervention). This included both increasing use of male and female condoms and reducing the number of sexual contacts.¹

A Package Developed from Science

Replicating Effective Programs (REP) is a CDC-initiated project that identifies HIV/AIDS prevention interventions with demonstrated evidence of effectiveness. REP supports the original researchers in developing a user-friendly package of materials designed for prevention providers. *FIO* is one of the REP interventions and is the product of extensive collaboration among researchers, a community advisory board, and other community agencies. The package has been field tested in several community agencies and clinics across the United States by non-research staff.

1 Ehrhardt, A. A., Exner, T. M., Hoffman, S., Silberman, I., Leu, C-S., Miller, S., & Levin, B. (2002). A gender-specific HIV/STD risk reduction intervention for women in a health care setting: short- and long-term results of a randomized clinical trial. *AIDS Care*, 14(2), 147-161.

FIO Core Elements

- Enable women to personalize their risk for HIV and other STDs and identify gender-related barriers to safer sex
- Encourage women to prioritize safer sex
- Reinforce women's sexual and relationship rights
- Affirm a positive view of women's sexuality and safer sex
- Emphasize that women have choices in how to protect themselves
- Provide accurate information about HIV/STD risk and testing
- Build skills for safer sex
- Teach women how to address negative reactions and resistance to safer sex, to recognize and deal with relationship violence and other forms of abuse

FIO Key Characteristics

The Key Characteristics of FIO are:

Target Audience:

- Young women (18-30 years)
- Ethnically diverse women
- At-risk women who have sex with men
- Women living in communities where rates of HIV and other STDs are high

Session Structure and Logistics:

- Bring together groups of eight to twelve women to build group cohesion and support
- Conduct sessions in an enclosed space that is conducive to confidentiality, but large enough to allow the participants to move around
- Conduct sessions once a week to allow women time to practice the material

Techniques and Tools:

- Use a variety of tools for skill-building including demonstration, practice, discussions, and goal setting
- Use a variety of techniques to help women change their thoughts including sharing of personal experiences, letter writing, the Feeling Thermometer and relaxation
- Build group cohesion through "Thanks" Chips which allow participants to get and give positive reinforcement
- Use multi-cultural role-plays to stimulate discussion

Package Contents:

- Program Manager Guide
- Facilitators Guide with accompanying video
- Starter Kit with an Implementation Plan
- Technical Assistance Guide
- Marketing Brochure

Intervention Training

Program staff members from agencies adopting *FIO* attend a five-day training in which they learn about the intervention objectives, resource needs, and how to conduct the intervention with fidelity. They also have the opportunity to practice intervention delivery skills, and identify agency-specific implementation strategies.

Technical Assistance

To be determined

Timeline for Availability

Development of the REP package is underway and final versions of the REP materials will be available soon thereafter.

For More Information on the *FIO* Project Package

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